

Iowa DNR 2009 Non-Game Support Certificate



A trio of **Bonaparte's Gulls**, featured wildlife species in DNR's 2009 Nongame Support Certificate, was photographed by Kip Ladage, of Tripoli, Iowa. This is the first time one of Kip's outstanding wildlife images has been selected for a Nongame Certificate.

Since issuing the first support certificate back in 1979, The Wildlife Diversity Program has featured species that nest or reside in Iowa for a majority of their lives. Choosing Bonaparte's Gull this year breaks with tradition because the species is observed in Iowa only during spring and fall migration. This gull nests primarily along rivers and lakes

across the boreal forest and subarctic regions of Canada and Alaska, wintering mostly along the U.S. Gulf coast and eastern seaboard. But the Iowa Wildlife Action Plan of 2006 directs the state to conserve habitat for all wildlife, both resident and migratory species, and Bonaparte's Gulls are seen with increasing frequency as they stop to feed and rest on migration through Iowa.

Bonaparte's Gulls belong to a group of distinctively hooded gulls that include another more familiar Iowa migrant, the Franklin's Gull. That species is often seen in flocks following farmers' field work in the spring. It is distinguished in adult breeding plumage by a darker gray back (or "mantle"), red feet and bill, and a hood that extends about halfway down the back of the head. Adult breeding plumage Bonaparte's Gulls, as depicted in this year's Nongame Support Certificate, feature a lighter gray mantle, black bill, bright orange feet, and a hood that extends just slightly over the back of the head. The only other bird for which it can sometimes be mistaken is the larger and much rarer Black-headed Gull.

Bonaparte's Gulls might even be called "dainty" in comparison to most of Iowa's more-commonly seen gulls, floating lightly in the water and displaying a buoyant, graceful flight somewhat similar to that of terns. In Iowa, they are most often seen in migration on our large reservoir lakes, the large natural lakes of northern Iowa and on the Mississippi River.

Cost = \$5.00

Make checks payable to the "Iowa Department of Natural Resources"

Mail order to:
Department of Natural Resources
Attn: Non-game Support Certificate
Wallace State Office Building
Des Moines, IA 50319-0034

Phone orders: Call (515) 281-5918. Credit cards accepted.

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<http://www.iowadnr.com/wildlife/files/divsupport01.html>